

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 TANANA 00492 111643Z

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ACTION CU-04

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FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6172

C O N F I D E N T I A L TANANARIVE 0492

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SCUL, MA

SUBJ: EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE: BUDGET PLANNING LEVELS  
FOR FY75.

REF: STATE 71630

FOR: ASSISTANT SECRETARIES EASUM AND RICHARDSON

BEGIN SUMMARY: URGENTLY REQUEST FY75 EXCHANGE PERSONS BUDGET ALLOCATION BE RASIED FROM DEPT'S PROPOSED \$35,000 TO PARA RECOM- MENDATION OF \$60,000. WE BELIEVE LATTER FIGURE FAR MORE COMPAT- IBLE WITH LEVEL OF US INTERESTS IN MADAGASCAR (COMPARED WITH MANY OTHER AF COUNTRIES). PROPOSED \$35,000 WOULD CONFINE PRO- GRAM TO EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE, VIRTUALLY ELIMINATING ANY POSS- IBILITY FOR CONTINUATION OF LEADER GRANT PROGRAM WHICH HAS PROVED SUCH VALUABLE TOOL ON BEHALF US INTERESTS HERE DURING PAST TWO YEARS. END SUMMARY.

1. URGENTLY REQUEST YOUR PERSONAL RECONSIDERATION OF FY75 EDU- CATION AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE BUDGET LEVEL FOR MADAGASCAR. PARA PAPER FOR MADAGASCWR (TANA'S A-045, 19MAR) RECOMMENDS \$60,000 FOR THIS PURPOSE, BUT REFTEL PROVIDES ONLY \$35,000.

2. SINCE DEPT'S ADOPTION OF PARA SYSTEM SEEMS MEAN BY VERY NAT- URE OF TERM THAT RESOURCE ALLOCATION WOULD BE MADE IN ACCORD- ANCE WITH THE LEVEL OF US INTERESTS TO BE PROMOTED AND PROTECTED, I FIND IT DIFFICULT UNDERSTAND WHY TANANARIVE IS PLACED IN SAME BUDGET CATEGORY AS SERIES POSTS TO WHICH REFTEL SENT. US HAS CLEARLY IDENTIFIABLE INTERESTS IN MADAGASCAR LED BY NASA  
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PAGE 02 TANANA 00492 111643Z

STATION (TOGETHER WITH OTHERS LISTED IN PARA PAPER), WHEREAS

IN MOST OTHER COUNTRIES TO WHICH REFTEL SENT IT IS, I BELIEVE, DIFFICULT TO IDENTIFY MUCH, IF ANYTHING, IN THE WAY OF CONCRETE US INTERESTS.

3. I KNOW THAT COMPARISONS ARE USUALLY ODIUS, BUT IT ALSO STRIKES ME AS STRANGE THAT, WHICH EXCEPTION MALAWI AND GAMBIA, REFTEL IS NOT ADDRESSED TO ANY AF POST IN WHICH LANGUAGE IS PRIMARILY ENGLISH. I ASSUME THIS MEANS THAT VIRTUALLY ALL ENGLISH LANGUAGE POSTS ARE PLACED IN HIGHER BUDGET CATEGORY, BUT, IF SO, ON WHAT RATIONALE? SPEAKING OF ENGLISH DOES NOT STRIKE ME AS BEING A US INTEREST IN ITSELF, PARTICULARLY SINCE SOME AF COUNTRIES SPEAKING ENGLISH ARE AMONG THOSE MOST INIMICAL TO US INTERESTS. MOREOVER, IT IS HARD FOR ME TO COME UP WITH A SPECIFIC US INTEREST IN CERTAIN OF THESE ENGLISH-SPEAKING COUNTRIES.

4. LIMIT OF \$35,000 PROPOSED BY DEPT FOR MADAGASCAR WILL CONFINE OUR FY75 PROGRAM TO ONE AMERICAN PROFESSOR AND THREE MALAGASY STUDENTS. THESE ARE POLITICALLY VERY HELPFUL SINCE GOMR AND PARTICULARLY FONMIN RATSIRAKA HAVE MADE CLEAR HOW MUCH IMPORTANCE THEY ATTACH TO EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE FROM US. THIS FACT HAS BEEN FURTHER EMPHASIZED BY POLITICAL DECISION JUST TAKEN BY GOMR, AGAIN ON RATSIRAKA'S INITIATIVE, TO PARTICIPATE FULLY IN US AFGRAD PROGRAM, DESPITE DRAIN IMPOSED ON TERRIBLY TIGHT BUDGET AND FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESOURCES BY PAYMENT OF EXTENSIVE TRANSPORT COSTS TO AND FROM US FOR MALAGASY STUDENTS.

5. BUT \$35,000 LIMIT WILL ALLOW VIRTUALLY NOTHING FOR CONTINUATION IN FY75 OF LEADER GRANT PROGRAM. IN PAST TWO YEARS SINCE RESUMPTION OF CORDIAL RELATIONS WITH GOMR, THESE GRANTS HAVE BEEN EXCELLENTLY USED TO FURTHER US INTERESTS. JUST TO CITE ONE EXAMPLE, AS ASST SECY EASUM WELL KNOWS FROM RECENT TRAFFIC, NOTHING HAS SERVED US INTERESTS BETTER THAN PARTIAL LEADER GRANT MADE LAST FALL TO GEN ANDRIAMAHAZO. WE HAVE SIMILARLY FIRST-RATE LIST OF CANDIDATES TO PROPOSE FOR FY75, PLUS CARRYOVER OF ONE OR TWO CANDIDATES WHO MAY NOT BE FUNDED IN FY74. THESE ARE REASONS WE ASKED IN PARA PAPER FOR \$60,000 -- TO ALLOW US SIX-SEVEN LEADER GRANTS IN FY75.

6. I HOPE YOU WILL NOT ANSWER BY TELLING US TO TRUST TO FALL-CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 TANANA 00492 111643Z

OUT. AFTER MY TALK LAST DEC WITH ASST SECY RICHARDSON AND HIS COLLEAGUES I WAS HOPEFUL AND OPTIMISTIC THAT FALLOUT WOULD SUBSTANTIALLY ADD TO OUR FY74 BUDGET. BUT ALL WE HAVE GOTTEN SO FAR IS ADDITIONAL \$400 (FOR WHICH WE ARE GRATEFUL, BUT IT DOES NOT GIVE US MUCH TO DEPEND UPON).

7. I KNOW FUNDS AS ALWAYS ARE TIGHT. IF I MAY PUT FORTH ONE SUGGESTION WHICH MIGHT HELP, I WOULD BE GLAD TO HAVE MADAGASCAR

FOREGO THE FOUR-FIVE REGIONAL PROJECT GRANTS IT SEEMS TO GET ANNUALLY IF EQUIVALENT AMOUNT COULD BE ADDED TO OUR BILATERAL PROGRAM. BASED ON EXPERIENCE HERE, REGIONAL PROJECTS ARE MUCH MORE DIFFICULT TO TIE TO US INTERESTS THAN BILATERAL PROJECTS. PEOPLE PICKED FOR REGIONAL GRANTS ARE EITHER SO YOUNG OR STILL SO FAR DOWN THE LINE THAT WE HAVE LITTLE ROLE IN THEIR SELECTION AND IT IS EXTREMELY QUESTIONABLE WHETHER THEY WILL EVER SERVE US INTERESTS VERY MUCH. I SUSPECT SAME WEAKNESSES WITH RESPECT REGIONAL PROJECTS EXIST IN OTHER COUNTRIES ALSO.

8. WE VERY GRATEFUL FOR FY76 BUDGET ALLOCATION OF \$70,000 (STATE 72431).  
MENDENHALL

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